

REPORT  
OF  
MR. JACKSON H. RALSTON,

DELEGATE FROM THE  
INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION

TO THE  
PARIS EXPOSITION OF 1878,  
PRESENTED AT WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1879.

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# REPORT OF MR. JACKSON H. RALSTON,

DELEGATE TO THE PARIS EXPOSITION OF 1878.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 4, 1879.

*To the Officers and Members of the International Typographical Union :*

GENTLEMEN—It will be remembered that in 1876 the International Typographical Union was honored by the presence at its sessions at Philadelphia of M. Emile François, Delegate of the printers of Paris.

M. François came to this country to investigate generally into the state and progress of the art of printing among us, and to learn something of our condition as members of the great working class of the United States; he was also the bearer of an address from his Parisian brethren congratulating American printers upon the Centennial anniversary of their country's independence.

The International Typographical Union, at its session of the following year in Louisville, Ky., deemed it fitting and appropriate that the courtesy of the Frenchmen should be reciprocated by sending a Delegate to that country in 1878, upon the occasion of the Paris Exposition, anticipated as a grand fête of the French Republic.

I was honored in being chosen as its Delegate, and the instructions given were as follows :

"1. That such Delegate be instructed to recognize in a proper manner the compliment paid the printers of the United States in 1876 by the printers of France.

"2. He shall investigate the state of trade in France.

"3. He shall inquire the prices of labor as received by printers in that country.

"4. He shall weigh the condition of French printers in comparison with our own.

"5. He shall inform himself as to the strength of trades-unions and their relations to the laws of France, and consider what measures are most feasible looking toward the union of printers of this country with those of France.

"6. He shall consider their affiliation with other trades for the purpose of elevating all.

"7. He shall consider the prevailing sentiment with regard to the disposition of property."

Armed with these instructions, your Delegate left New York May 1, 1878, per steamer Canada for London. Arrived there, I immediately put myself in communication with Mr. Self, Secretary of the London Printers' Union, and derived

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from him much interesting information as to the organization and workings of trades-unions generally in England, and more especially as to the peculiar features of the London Compositors' Society.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Self I was also made familiar with the workings of the London *Telegraph* office, and of Cassell, Petter & Galpin's book printing establishment. This latter is undoubtedly one of the best arranged offices in the world, and no little care is taken of the health of the compositors therein employed.

To Mr. Broadhurst, Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the English Trades Congress, I am indebted for documents furnished. Mr. Lloyd Jones, one of the leading authorities on English trades-unions, and Mr. Pincott, now foreman of a large publishing-house as well as a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, gave me the benefit of their observations upon many points of interest to workingmen.

#### ENGLISH TYPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETIES.

First among the English typographical societies is the London Society of Compositors, with 4,700 members and a reserve capital of \$70,000. About three-fourths of the compositors of London are gathered within its fold.

The Provincial Typographical Association includes 4,500 members, working in various towns through England outside of London and also in Ireland. The reserve fund of this Association is nearly \$10,000.

The Scottish Typographical Association has jurisdiction over Scotland.

All the Irish societies are under the control of the English Provincial Typographical Society, with the exception of Dublin Union, which remains apart.

In addition to these societies, there exist also a Correctors of the Press Society in London, as well as a Machine-Men's and a Pressmen's Society.

The London Typographical Society recognizes unhesitatingly our International Typographical Union cards, and we should extend a similar courtesy to it.

Nine hours is the rule for a day's work as to printers in England or Scotland. The correlation between an advance of wages and a reduction of hours for labor may be illustrated by the case of the printers of Glasgow, who, in 1860, received 25 shillings per week, working sixty hours, and in 1877 32 shillings and 6 pence, working fifty-four hours. In Greenock the advance is still more striking, as there, in 1860, the wages were but 20 shillings per week of sixty hours, while at the present time the figures are the same as for Glasgow.

In London, 6 shillings per day constitute the standard wages.

The London Society, upon the death of a member, pays a sum varying from £5 to £20, according to the length of membership of the deceased. From £5 to £10 are given to any member desiring to emigrate. Members while unemployed are granted relief at the rate of 8 shillings per week. A library is established for the use of members.

The apprenticeship question is one which has received considerable attention in England, and although vigorous efforts have been made to reduce the time required, seven years still remains the term of apprenticeship. The enemies of so long a term of servitude argue that thereby the master gains the benefit, since the last two or three years of apprenticeship are necessarily the most productive period, and on that account the master is induced to take many more boys than would be the case were five years the period of service. Again, the modern tendency toward the division of the trade into branches is borne in mind, and, as this is undeniable, a reduction of the term of apprenticeship is justified. The London Society has no rule regulating the number of apprentices. The Provincial Association has such a rule, and I am informed that it has been a fruitful cause of strikes.

A London committee which recently considered the apprenticeship question found the practice of working apprentices on "stint" to be a pernicious one, for under it masters considered rather the amount of work which the apprentice could

do than the manner in which it was performed. The apprentice looked at the matter in much the same light. The committee insisted that thereafter apprentices should only be employed by the week. Inasmuch as the same evil exists with us, we should employ a similar mode of curing it.

#### ADVANCEMENT OF TRADES-UNIONS IN ENGLAND.

It is not my purpose to give a review of the progress of trade societies in England, detailing all the steps which have led them to their present high standard. A few comments upon their recent advancement will suffice.

In 1865 strikes in Sheffield caused a Parliamentary examination into the workings of trades-unions. Their enemies were well content thereat, but the committee of that body found that while occasional abuses had existed, yet there was much of benefit in trade societies, and accordingly in 1870 a committee of the Trades Congress of England was able to secure the passage by Parliament of a bill doing away with punishment for many actions classed as conspiracies, and recognizing trades-unions as lawful institutions. This bill gave unions a right to hold real and personal property, to sue and be sued with respect to that property, and protected them very thoroughly in its possession. In 1873 a bill perfecting this was passed, and since that date legislation has been so liberal that scarcely a vestige of the old conspiracy laws is left to disgrace the statute books.

The Trades Congress of England meets annually. It was instituted about twelve years ago. Matters interesting workmen are brought before it, and through it appropriate bills are presented to Parliament. The Trade Congress is now endeavoring to secure laws for the abolition of imprisonment for debt, for a revision of the Patent law, and it also insists that country Justices shall possess some legal knowledge, even if appointed, as they have hitherto been, from among the rich gentry. A codification of the criminal laws of England is also a point to be gained.

Considerably more than one million men are united in trade societies in England. The reserve funds of some of these organizations go high up into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. These enormous reserves are gathered together through the operations of the relief system, and are now subject to heavy drafts in order to assist members to emigrate.

#### ENGLISH TRADE-UNION LAW.

In 1871 was passed by the British Parliament the most important of modern laws affecting trades-unions. This law provides that:

"The purposes of any trade-union shall not, by reason merely that they are in restraint of trade, be deemed to be unlawful, so as to render any member of such trade-union liable to criminal prosecution or otherwise.

"The purposes of any trade-union shall not, by reason merely that they are in restraint of trade, be unlawful, so as to render void or voidable any agreement or trust.

"Nothing in this act shall enable any Court to entertain any legal proceeding instituted with the object of directly enforcing or recovering damages for the breach of any of the following agreements, namely:

"1. Any agreement between members of a trade-union as such concerning the conditions on which any members for the time being of such trade-union shall or shall not sell their goods, transact business, employ or be employed.

"2. Any agreement for the payment by any person of any subscription or penalty to a trade-union.

"3. Any agreement for the application of the funds of a trade-union (a) to provide benefits to members, or (b) to furnish contributions to any employer or workman not a member of such trade-union in consideration of such employer or workman



acting in conformity with the rules or regulations of such trade-union, or (c) to discharge any fine imposed upon any person by sentence of a court of justice; or

"4. Any agreement made between one trade-union and another; or

"5. Any bond to secure the performance of any of the above-mentioned agreements; but nothing in this section shall be deemed to constitute any of the above-mentioned agreements unlawful."

It is then provided that seven or more members of a trade-union can register it, and that any union so registered can hold lands, not exceeding one acre, in the name of trustees, and perform any act necessary in connection with such lands. The Union is also permitted to hold personal estate in the same manner. The trustees may be sued, or may defend in any action in law or equity touching the property, right or claim to property of any trade-union. Other sections provide in what manner trustees shall be held accountable for their actions, and what punishment shall be meted out to such as may embezzle moneys or refuse to surrender property upon the expiration of their term of office.

General rules are established regarding the manner in which registry is to be obtained.

Annual reports are required to be submitted to a Registrar, showing assets and liabilities at the date of the report and receipts and expenditures for the year then past, and indicating separately the expenditure in respect to the several objects of the trade-union. The manner in which legal proceedings can be had is then described at length.

The term "trade-union" is described as meaning "such combination, whether temporary or permanent, for regulating the relations between workmen and masters, or between workmen and workmen, or between masters and masters, or for imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business as would, if this act had not passed, have been deemed to have been an unlawful combination by reason of some one or more of its purposes being in restraint of trade; provided that this act shall not affect (1) any agreement between partners as to their own business; (2) any agreement between an employer and those employed by him as to such employment; (3) any agreement in consideration of the sale of the good-will of a business, or of instruction in any profession, trade, or handicraft."

This law grants to trades-unions that protection to their property which the common law practically denied them. Inasmuch, however, as trades-unions can only sue, or be sued, with respect to their right, title or interest in property, they escape legal proceedings which might be instituted against them on account of imaginary grievances occasioned by their action. Similar laws in each State would place us upon a safer financial system.

## FRANCE.

After remaining a short time in England, I crossed the Channel and went to Paris.

In Paris my reception at the hands of the *Chambre Syndicale*, or Executive Committee of the *Typographical Society*, was most cordial. The Society was then struggling under difficulties well-nigh insurmountable. Twelve hundred members were on strike for an advance of about 10 per cent. on their wages, which was resisted generally by the large printing offices. A brief history of the struggle may not now be out of place.

After the demand for an increase was made by the compositors, several conferences took place between their employers and themselves; the differences were largely adjusted through mutual concessions, but a fatal dispute arose as to the amount to be paid for work "*en conscience*," or time-work. In this regard an advance of 8 centimes per hour was demanded by the compositors; 5 centimes were offered, and from the disagreement upon this point arose the strike. The employers appeared not unwilling to yield, but the publishers (*Hachette & Co.*, for example)

declared that they would give no work to any master-printer who should pay the advanced rates. It should be borne in mind that publishing and printing constitute two entirely separate occupations in Paris. Thus the lines were drawn between employer and employee. Provincial France was scourged for workmen to replace the strikers. Even Spain and Germany were drawn upon, and although the number of men on strike gradually decreased from 1,200 in the beginning to 400 at the close of the strike, nearly ten weeks later, yet the advantage remained with the employers.

Only the most wealthy employers resisted the demands of the workmen. That they were in a situation to do so was owing to an abuse created by the First Empire, and the evil effects of which exist to the present time. In 1810 a monopoly of printing was created in Paris, whereby but sixty men were privileged to act as master-printers, and all others were prohibited from engaging in the business. As a consequence, a class was established with interests and sympathies distinct from those of their workmen. Wealth came into their hands, and although the monopoly was abolished in 1870, and printing offices have since doubled in number, yet the greater share of work still remains with the long-established *ateliers*.

This strike was undoubtedly one of the most costly ever known in the printing business. At its commencement the Parisian Typographical Society had on hand 240,000 francs. At its close the Society was 60,000 francs in debt. Thus \$60,000 will represent a portion of the expense to the fraternity.

Immediately upon arriving in Paris I communicated your sentiments to the *Chambre Syndicale*. They expressed their deep appreciation of all measures tending toward a better mutual understanding, and placed in my hands everything which would serve to give me an idea of their own struggles and condition.

A few days subsequently to my arrival occurred a meeting of the compositors of Paris. Probably 1,800 were in attendance. To this meeting your representative was presented by M. Ménestrier, President of the Society, and tendered to the printers there assembled salutations on your behalf. The applause attending this presentation was interpreted by your Delegate as an evidence of the kindly feeling of the French workmen toward our own country.

A noticeable feature on this occasion was the large number of very young men present. This seemed to indicate two facts: One, that Parisian workshops were not conducive to a long life, whether through bad ventilation or otherwise; the other, that with greater freedom of the press had come a marked increase in the number of compositors. Later investigations seemed to confirm the correctness of these inferences.

French parliamentary rules are different from our own, and possibly in some respects are better. That which especially struck me was the great power reposed in the hands of the presiding officer. All propositions desired to be laid before the assembly were submitted to the President several days previous to the evening of meeting, and the order in which they were to be brought forward rested with him.

It will thus clearly be seen how great is his power in indicating what resolution should be adopted. This system presents a compensating advantage, for thereby better order prevails.

On the occasion of which I have spoken each one made his address from the tribune at the right hand of the presiding officer, and spoke as designated by him.

#### REPORT OF THE FRENCH DELEGATE TO AMERICA.

It seems fitting at this time to make some reference to the report submitted by M. Emile François upon his return from the United States in 1876.

M. François commences with a description of his voyage to America and return therefrom; he then gives a brief notice of the earliest American newspapers, followed by an account of our typographical unions, together with the New York and Philadelphia scale of prices. A detailed examination into the manner of working



in the New York *Herald* office succeeds, and herein we find the following tribute to American typography :

"One knows the well-founded reputation of the American journals as respects their printing ; the neatness and elegance of the type ; the excellence of the paper. We do not see in Paris any newspaper which can be compared to them in these different respects, and the time yet seems far distant when our dailies, with their ' nail-heads ' and bad quality of paper, shall rival the perfections of their brethren beyond the sea."

A report of the banquet of the International Union at Philadelphia then follows, in the course of which M. François says :

"We performed a part of the end of our mission in speaking some words, which were at once translated by Mr. Peter A. Crossby, of Montreal, and the President read in English the address of the Parisian Typographical Society to the American printers. An indescribable enthusiasm, mingled with the most significant American cries and cheers, greeted the close of the address. Then we distributed the too rare copies of the certificate of stock of the *Imprimerie Nouvelle*. Such a work had never been seen in America, and it was, unhappily, impossible to satisfy its admirers. We then took leave of our amiable brethren in promising to be present at the next Exposition."

The American printer is then described in the following words :

"Let us give an idea of the American typo in the printing office. Let us take one of the New York *Herald* employees, for instance. Attired as a gentleman, a little basket upon his arm containing his lunch, he enters the composing-room calmly and in a dignified manner, after mounting the hundred steps which separate the workshop from the dusty surface of the street. His first care is to place his lunch in the cooler, then to remove his outer garments and to put on an apron such as our fathers wore. He then goes to his case, where a floor-hand has put aside his type for distribution. He draws from his pocket his chewing-tobacco, places it in his cheek, assures himself by a glance that his cuspador is at the extremity of his salivary jet, seats himself upon his stool, and distributes without cessation until the hour of composition. A visit to a bar situated in a neighboring basement is not a rare thing, there to take a drink with a companion. As the manner of work demands no conversation, the American compositor may quit the workshop when composition is completed without having said one word. With few exceptions this is the manner of procedure.

"A great pleasure is experienced by repeating as often as possible and in a loud voice, 'What do you say?' At each repetition the office literally turns round.

"In important houses no relations exist between the proprietor and the workmen ; the intermediary is the foreman.

"The American compositor is, in general, more rapid than his French brother. This comes, let us believe, from his colder temperament and less susceptibility to nervousness. One strikes fire less often than in France. The intellectual standard of the American compositor is, on an average, a little better than in France, but he has a terrible enemy—whiskey ; and notions of economy and forethought are almost unknown to him."

Our critic next discovers that composing-machines are used but little more in America than in France, and, after briefly reviewing them, passes to the subjects of the founding of type, stereotyping, lithographing, &c., which he finds well developed in our country.

The narration of visits to the Exposition occupies a number of pages, after which M. François discusses the American manner of living. He says :

"Prepare to tremble, oh, my brethren ! The habitual drink of our American brother is water !—iced, it is true. Sometimes he drinks tea or coffee. Few drink beer while eating. Wine at table is completely unknown !"



Concerning the dress and bearing of the American mechanic, the French Delegate says that the American "takes better care of himself than the French workman. When his day's labor is ended he dons his coat and hat, with nothing to distinguish him on the street from the richest banker. His cuffs and shirt-collar are perhaps of paper, but they shine with whiteness, and nothing would induce the American to walk abroad with doubtful or torn linen. Thus the dignity of each is advanced in the eyes of all."

The observance of Sunday and other American habits are next discussed, and the Grangers receive a due share of attention.

In giving a general résumé, M. François says :

"Certainly there exist in the United States many strong and beautiful institutions, and the Americans may rightly be proud of them. But what shadows to this picture! \* \* \* In place of that prosperity, of that well-being of the worker so much vaunted, one sees only the spectacle of moral and material misery on the part of the immense majority. Bound under the crushing and feudal yoke of the aristocracy of money, nowhere is merit without riches less appreciated! A man 'is worth' so much, they say in common parlance. A corruption of public authority and feebleness in the administration of justice are averred facts. In this democratic country only the rich escape the execution of law. In all cases the judges can grant liberty under bond, and this bond, except in very rare instances, is never refused. Nothing prevents the guilty party from disappearing, the bond is paid and there it ends, for they do not follow up proceedings against the offender.

"Further, the complications of legislation and practice give to those who can pay skilful lawyers the almost infallible means of lengthening out processes and even of checking prosecutions.

"But one will urge the objection that the press is free from all chains, and should hardly combat and expose to the light the constant abuses of all sorts. Not so.

"The number of journals truly independent is very limited. The others, paid or sustained by political parties, have no interest in spreading the truth. Quite the contrary. Thus rings and malversations have full play. One can thus see that the most important wheels of the social and political machine are in distress, and that it is time the United States should stop upon that fatal step which leads to catastrophe."

After further general observations, M. François says :

"Now, in conclusion, shall we say to our colleagues, to our compatriots, that our friends, our American brethren, enjoy a more enviable condition than our own? No. Life there has a wider scope. The liberties of the press and of union exist, it is true, yet these liberties are but relative, having a master-weight bearing heavily upon them—money.

"Let us, then, be persuaded that there, as here, the producer alone is nothing, can do nothing, but that associated with his companions he can hope all things."

Such is the view of our own country as presented by the French Delegate to his colleagues. An American pessimist could not have given a worse picture of his countrymen and their government. I have esteemed it my duty to seek excellences in France and in organizations of French workingmen, rather than to exhibit their faults or imperfections, except as a matter of warning to us. The conscientious man may not find Goldsmith far wrong, as he writes :

Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,  
His first, best country ever is at home,  
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,  
And estimate the blessings which they share,  
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find  
An equal portion dealt to all mankind,  
As diff'rent good, by art or nature given  
To different nations, makes their blessings even.

M. François' estimate of the higher intelligence of the American compositor over his French brother is worthy of attention. Two reasons for this immediately suggest themselves: One, our superior system of primary education; the other, that the American travels much more than the Frenchman, and gains thereby through intercourse with men in different sections of the country. It is jestingly said that the true Parisian compositor scarcely knows where lies the road to St. Denis, nine miles from Paris.

Again, with us, the printer has, undoubtedly, more pride of personal appearance than many other artisans, and infinitely more than the French typographer. The latter frequently walks the streets wearing the blouse of the office.

The Frenchman spends a large portion of his earnings in wine, and appears little troubled with a sense of responsibility. This happy-go-lucky disposition undoubtedly contributes largely to prevent his advancement, and we rarely find in France printers who have become members of what are known as the learned professions. Institutions have enforced somewhat this state of affairs, yet we must believe that energy and earnestness, well applied, would have broken over all barriers and led the French printer to fill any position in his land.

#### TYPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETIES OF PARIS.

The division of labor in the printing offices of Paris finds expression in the number of societies. The great society, and that with which my relations were naturally most intimate, is the Union of the Compositors, under the name of "*La Société Typographique Parisienne (Secours Mutuels)*."

The others are the Societies of Gutenberg (of Machine-Pressmen), of Hand-Pressmen, of Correctors of the Press, and also that of the Foremen.

#### SOCIÉTÉ TYPOGRAPHIQUE PARISIENNE.

This Society was formed in 1860. Its objects have been thus stated:

"1. To succor each one of its members in sickness, infirmity, and old age.

"2. To create a sinking fund under certain specified conditions.

"3. To furnish assistance to the members who, for circumstances appreciated at the office of the Society, are forced to withdraw from Paris, and to members of other Typographical Societies of France which engage themselves reciprocally toward the members of the Parisian Typographical Society.

"4. To watch over the strict execution of the typographical tariff.

"5. To aid those of its members who may have lost their places in order to maintain the execution of the tariff."

"6. To facilitate by all means at its disposition the placing of members of the Society who are without work."

All persons desiring to become members of the Society, and who are duly qualified, pass a novitiate of three months after being admitted before partaking of the full benefits of members.

All members of the Society becoming sick are visited by the physician of the Society within forty-eight hours after the declaration of illness. Nothing, however, is paid to those who are ill but three days. After three days' illness sick members receive one franc and a half up to the sixtieth day; then the sum is increased to two francs up to the end of the year, if the illness so long continue. Should the illness be further prolonged and become incurable, a certain sum is fixed upon for the future at the office of the Society.

Members thrown out of work in order to maintain the tariff are entitled to three francs per day for two months.

In cases where the suit of a compositor against his master is recognized as just by the *Chambre Syndicale*, the cause is put at their expense before the Court of *Prud'hommes*.



Expulsions from the Society are only temporary: (1) for damage voluntarily inflicted upon the interests of the Society; (2) for refusal to conform to the decisions of the Bureau relative to the tariff. Final expulsions are given for infamous condemnations or malversation of the funds of the Society.

Upon the decease of any member the sum of thirty francs is appropriated toward the expense of his funeral, and one hundred francs are forwarded to the widow or children of the deceased. If he leaves neither widow nor children the money belongs to whoever may have been designated by the will of the defunct.

The administration of the Society is placed in the hands of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary, a Treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer, and *Chambre Syndicale*—in all, twenty-one men.

The President is elected by a majority of the members of the Society. He is required to be at least thirty years of age, and to have been a member of the Society for ten successive years. His duties are, in effect, the same as those of the similar officer in our organization.

The members of the *Chambre Syndicale*, or Bureau, are elected every six months. Each group of compositors having a receiver—who acts in many respects as a chairman—is expected to place one man in nomination.

One of the most important officers among the Parisian compositors is the Delegate. He is named by the Bureau, and holds the only paid office. His duties are to attend to all necessary writings and keep all books; respond to verbal information asked for by printers or others; keep a register of all decisions of the Bureau; send letters or circulars; correspond with French or foreign societies, and attend to all unexpected matters which demand immediate action. He should always take counsel of the *Chambre Syndicale*.

There is also a Commission of Consultation and Control, and its relation to the *Chambre Syndicale* is indicated by its name. No important measures are to be taken by the *Chambre Syndicale* without its approval, and to it the decision of certain questions is confided. This Commission is elected annually. A Committee of Verification, or Audit, is chosen by this Commission from among its members, and is charged with the duty of examining the accounts of the Society each month.

A receiver of the dues of the compositors of each printing office is chosen by them from their number. As the compositors are held responsible for the delivery by him of the moneys confided to his care, it is thus made their interest to secure a man of unquestioned integrity. It is also the duty of the receiver to distribute circulars or attend to such other matters as may be placed in his charge by the Society.

A general assembly of all members of the Society is held twice a year, although extraordinary sessions may be held upon urgent matters when deemed necessary by the *Chambre Syndicale* or demanded by fifty members. On all grave questions a vote is to be taken in the printing offices, in order to get at the sentiments of all the members.

This account will serve to give a general idea of the workings of the Society of Paris.

The majority, if not all, of the trades-unions of France are constructed in a similar manner, very great power being lodged in the hands of the *Chambre Syndicale*. We may doubt if American printers would permit nearly all their affairs to be decided, and their money to be expended, by a close corporation of about fifteen men, yet this system presents, nevertheless, certain advantages.

Business is thereby transacted much more quickly, and probably with as much wisdom as our societies exhibit. It is also easier for a body so small to present a consistent and determined front than is the case with our large ones. The *Chambre Syndicale* holds a weekly meeting, and we can understand readily that, as its services

are unpaid, except for lost time, a certain amount of devotion is demanded from its members.

The dues to the Society are usually greater than in America, being 2 francs 50 centimes (50 cents) per month, but, on the other hand, the benefits received are more extensive, in that sick and death benefits are given. The large dues have also served as a means of rendering the Society more stable, as 240,000 francs were in the treasury at the commencement of the recent strike. The sick benefits have caused the members to become more attached to the Society, it is believed, for I am assured that during the late strike not more than twenty of the 1,200 printers at one time out of work deserted their colors. Where in America could we discover a parallel for this?

#### SOCIETY OF GUTENBERG.

The Pressmen are united in a Society known as the "Society of Gutenberg." It numbers 250 members, and the monthly dues of each member are 3 francs. The standard of wages is 8 francs per day. The sick are divided into classes, and receive assistance according to the length of time they have been members. Old and enfeebled members are taken care of. At the present time the funds of the Society amount to 50,600 francs.

#### OTHER SOCIETIES.

The Hand-Pressmen are members of a Society which regulates the rate of wages. They are but few in number, as their particular branch of business is nearly out of vogue.

The Correctors of the Press are members of a Society for mutual benefit. One of the principal objects of this Society is to secure employment for its members. There are in Paris many proof-readers who have never been practical printers. They have wandered into this business after, perhaps, having essayed at law or medicine. Their customary rate of pay is slightly in advance of that of the compositor.

The Society of the Foremen is for mutual benefit, and more especially to aid its members in procuring situations.

#### MANNER OF WORK IN FRENCH PRINTING OFFICES.

Work in French book-printing offices is preferably performed by the piece. The situation of the maker-up is vastly superior to that of the compositor. The compositor is paid simply for the number of lines or letters he actually composes. The maker-up counts as his share all the "fat," or "*bon*," which may accrue in making up. The compositor has no share in break pages, or sunk or running titles. The maker-up may thus receive 80 francs for his week's labor, while the compositor is forced, perhaps, to be content with 20 or 30 francs. That such a system has not long ago been abolished speaks volumes for the patience of the French compositor.

A somewhat different system prevails among the "*journalistes*," or compositors upon newspapers. There the *commandite* is brought into play, and its operations are explained in this wise:

When a publisher desires to issue a new paper, he asks some compositor to form a *commandite*—in other words, to select a certain number of printers to do the composition. The prospective publisher states what will be the number and width of columns in the paper, and the sizes of types to be used. The average type is then determined, and the entire paper is cast up as of that body. The proprietor then agrees to give the sum called for by that number of letters to the compositors for each issue, all standing matter being measured each time. The compositors select a maker-up, and the amount paid each week is equally divided among all the men working in the *commandite*, the maker-up alone receiving something additional. An equal amount of work is required from all, that amount being based upon the



number of lines necessary to fill out the paper. The only reward gained for his celerity by the swift compositor is that he is soonest able to complete his labors. When a compositor is so slow as not to be able to compose his stint within the hours of composition, his companions soon find means by which to rid themselves of him. Inasmuch as *commandites* were formed on many journals when they carried little standing matter as compared with that at the present time, the hours for work have now frequently become so reduced that a man may earn his daily proportion with not more than five or six hours of composition. Compositors *en commandite* gain from 7 to 10 or even 12 francs per day.

That the French find the system beneficial is indicated by the rule of the Parisian Compositors' Society that all work upon newspapers shall be performed by *commandites*. Through this system equality is obtained in the amount of labor performed per man, as well as in individual earnings. Apprentices are but little employed in them, and old men are at a disadvantage on account of their inability to compose the requisite amount of type. The system is designed for the young and vigorous.

Sometimes a *pro rata* system is in use by a *commandite*, in which case the earnings of all are proportioned to the amount of work done. Under this system old men can receive employment.

#### FEMALE LABOR.

The introduction of women in the printing office is an instrumentality through which employers seek a reduction of wages of compositors in France and Switzerland. This procedure has created such an antagonism on the part of the men toward women compositors that the Paris Compositors' Society will not admit them, and one object of the Swiss Union is stated to be the prevention of the introduction of women at the trade. The compositors base their policy upon two grounds—one, that the system objected to is injurious to female morality; the other, that through its operations an additional number of workers are placed upon an already overstocked labor market. The truth of the latter proposition cannot be gainsaid, but employers are only anxious to take advantage of the fact it states.

French compositors do not yet understand that if they would assuage the present conflict they must be willing to admit women into their unions; that thus and thus only will they convince women that their interests are mutual and identical, and that in so acting as to reduce the wages of men they do but injure themselves.

#### CONSEIL PRUD'HOMME.

There exists in France a Court under the above name, which presents many features of interest to us as workmen. The primal origin of this body is not very clear. It appears to have sprung into existence long ago among the fishermen of the south coast of France. There, placing a case in the hands of a "Prud'homme" seemed to signify its reference to a man of integrity, and one who was able to consider justly the question in dispute. It appears also to have existed anciently in Paris, but was renewed and revived under Napoleon I. Under his Empire this Court was given a general application and began to assume its present powers.

First, then, as to the formation of the Court.

It consists of not less than four members, and is composed equally of masters and men. A President is chosen by the Government, and if that President be a man already elected as a Prud'homme the vacancy is to be supplied by a new election. The President is to be a master, although under the republic of 1848 the President was a master or a workman for alternate periods of three months, and was selected from among the number elected. All masters or all workmen who have attained the age of thirty years and who know how to read and write are eligible as Prud'hommes for their respective classes.

When a sufficient number of persons of a particular trade desire that the Conseil Prud'homme be established among them they make application to the Municipal Council, and this application is referred by them to their Chamber of Commerce. The demand is subsequently transmitted by the Prefect to the Minister of Commerce and Public Works, accompanied with the deliberation of the Chamber of Commerce and the determination of the Municipal Council, giving a pledge to appropriate the sums necessary to pay the expenses of the proposed Conseil Prud'homme. A table is also given indicating the number of industries to be placed under the jurisdiction of the projected Council, the number of Prud'hommes to be elected for each one, and the number of workmen affected. After this is done the Government has the right to authorize as many Councils as there are different interests to be represented.

The Council being empowered to proceed, we come next to the manner of its selection.

Notice is posted throughout the town for all workmen or employers of the specified trades to appear at the Mairie, or seat of government of the arrondissement, and become enrolled. The two classes are enrolled in different books, and care is taken to see that those desiring to vote actually belong to the trade specified. A day is named, the lists being complete, and a ballot is conducted in the ordinary manner. An absolute majority is required on the first ballot to secure election. This not being secured, a simple plurality will elect on a second ballot.

The Council being elected, a President and Vice-President are named by the Government, and a Secretary is named by the Prefect upon the nomination of the President of the Council. The Council is then divided into the General Bureau and the Special Bureau.

The Special Bureau is for the conciliation of disputants. All matters subject to the jurisdiction of the Prud'hommes come before it first, when an effort is made to bring the parties to an understanding, and frequently such advice is given as to remove the necessity for further difficulty.

Two-thirds of all cases are settled here, as I was informed by a Prud'homme.

This Bureau is conducted by two Prud'hommes, one a master and one a workman, and a sitting is given at least once a week.

The General Bureau is for the determination of all cases appealed from the Special Bureau. It consists of at least four members, two of its members being detailed for specified periods to serve as Judges for the Special Bureau, while at the same time continuing and acting as members of the General Bureau. The General Bureau is a court of last resort for all cases coming under its jurisdiction and not involving more than two hundred francs.

The Conseil Prud'homme is chosen for six years, one-half of its members being elected every three years. The masters serving in it receive no compensation, but the workmen in Paris receive ten francs for each sitting. The expenses are provided for by the Municipal Council of the vicinity in which it sits.

The powers of the Conseil Prud'homme are various.

All designs which it is desired to secure by patent are deposited under seal at the seat of the Council and preserved in its archives, the date of the deposit being affixed. All disputes as to property in designs are settled before the Prud'hommes.

Disputes as to balances of moneys due by merchants to the master of a workshop are carried before the Prud'hommes.

The first law authorizing the institution of this Court says that the Council of Prud'hommes "is instituted in order to terminate by way of conciliation the little differences which arise daily either between the manufacturers and the workmen or the masters of workshops and their companions or apprentices."

All disputes concerning apprentices or the proper manner of carrying out the contract of apprenticeship are determined by the Prud'hommes.



The regulations concerning apprenticeship will be treated of elsewhere.

The persons who are subject to the jurisdiction of the Councils are the manufacturing merchants, chiefs of workshops, assistants, overseers, workmen and apprentices. These cease to be thus subject when the disputes concern other affairs than those which are relative to the branch of industry which they carry on and the agreements of which that industry is the object. In such cases they go before the usual judges. It is made the duty of the Conseil Prud'homme to keep an exact register of the number of workmen employed in the different occupations, which information is given to the Chamber of Commerce when required. To obtain this information the Council is authorized to enter the workshops.

The foregoing will serve to give an idea of the formation, jurisdiction, and powers of the Conseil Prud'homme. The cost of bringing a suit before it is trifling, and thus justice is within easy reach of all.

The procedure is very simple. A workman, for instance, believes himself to have been defrauded by his master. The master is cited to appear before the Bureau of Conciliation. There an effort is made to adjust the differences which have arisen. A different remedy is, perhaps, pointed out to the workman, or the master may be urged to pay the sum demanded. If no settlement is reached, or if either party does not wish to abide by the judgment of the Bureau of Conciliation, an appeal is granted, and the opposite party is summoned to appear the following week before the General Bureau. There each party presents himself without attorney. The plaintiff states his case, the defendant likewise, and either party may question the opposite through the President-Judge. The parties may be sworn to tell "the truth and the whole truth." After this examination the President announces the decision of the Council, upon which immediate execution is granted.

If witnesses are examined they are required to state their relationship, if any, to the parties, and their interest in the matter in controversy. They are questioned apart from each other, no witness being allowed to be present while others in the same cause are being examined.

A brief view of the Prud'hommes of Paris will give us an idea of the extent to which this system is carried out in France. The great divisions of the Court are illustrated in the following table :

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONS.	No. of Prud'hommes, Masters and Work- men included.	No. of industries they represent.	DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONS.	No. of Prud'hommes, Masters and Work- men included.	No. of industries they represent.
<i>Metals :</i>			<i>Chemical Products :</i>		
First category, . . . .	4	182	Second category, . . . .	4	26
Second category, . . . .	6	60	Third category, . . . .	4	28
Third category, . . . .	6	53	Fourth category, . . . .	6	22
Fourth category, . . . .	6	34	Fifth category, . . . .	4	36
Fifth category, . . . .	4	26	Sixth category, . . . .	4	33
<i>Tissues :</i>			<i>Various Industries :</i>		
First category, . . . .	4	114	First category, . . . .	6	30
Second category, . . . .	4	17	Second category, . . . .	4	79
Third category, . . . .	6	63	Third category, . . . .	4	14
Fourth category, . . . .	4	15	Fourth category, . . . .	4	11
Fifth category, . . . .	4	19	Fifth category, . . . .	4	28
Sixth category, . . . .	4	7	Sixth category, . . . .	4	37
<i>Chemical Products :</i>					
First category, . . . .	4	150	Total, . . . . .	104	989

I have given the figures above because they show the great extension of the Prud'homme Court in Paris, and also as illustrating in a measure the division of industry in that city. We find 989 trades under the jurisdiction of the Prud'hommes. In such a great variety of occupations it becomes almost impossible to give the greatest perfection to the principle. Many trades not entirely similar are united together, but in this regard great care has been exercised, and it is believed that the chances of what might be an evil are reduced to a minimum. We find, in the same category with the compositors, the binders, stereotypers, proof-readers, type-founders, pressmen, lithographic printers and other analogous occupations.

The Court of Prud'hommes possesses many advantages over our method of referring similar matters to the judgment of Justices of the Peace. It is quicker and less expensive. It guarantees judges equally as impartial and assuredly as able as the Justices of the Peace, chosen by a caucus, are found to be among us. Moreover, the Prud'hommes are men acquainted with the business usages of the trade affected by a dispute, and are, therefore, practical judges.

It was my good fortune to be present at several sessions of the Bureaus of the Council, and I was struck with the anxiety shown to render exact justice. The Council seemed to me to be emphatically a court of workmen. In our courts we know that the employer is always at an advantage. In France master and man meet upon equal ground, and each defends his own cause.

Therein exists a spirit of the most exact equality; the workman and the master each and equally concede its impartiality and justice. Such has been the testimony of all acquainted with the matter with whom I have been brought in contact.

That this system should be adopted in our own country, with necessary modifications, I have no doubt. To cause its institution in many of our States requires but the effort and disposition of a few earnest men. Its universal adoption would secure the removal of many of the petty grievances from which we so frequently suffer.

My apology for spending so much time upon this subject, which does not particularly concern us as printers, is because it affects us in a higher and broader sense as workmen.

To M. Hippolyte Goyon, one of the prud'hommes for the compositors of Paris, I desire to tender especial thanks for information given me.

#### APPRENTICES.

Formerly, in many parts of France, owners of printing offices demanded a degree of education in their apprentices. They were required to present certificates of having successfully passed certain school examinations. This gave the old French printer a high standing. Of late years this standard has been lowered, and the serious thought of our French brethren is given to secure its restoration.

The present term of apprenticeship in France is of three years. Boys frequently enter the business at the age of twelve, when they are unfitted by education or thought to make good workmen. At twenty years of age they enter the army for one or five years, and not until after service therein does the serious work of life commence. This cannot but have an injurious effect both upon the boys and upon the trade. During the recent strike in Paris, also, many boys who were totally unfit to learn the trade were taken into offices not paying the regulation scale of prices. The effect of this policy on the part of the masters cannot but be disastrous in the future to both parties. The greater freedom of the press now prevailing in France and the recent rapid increase of printing offices have added largely to the number of apprentices. The *commandite* system prevents in a great measure the employment of apprentices who would afterward be superfluous journeymen. It is in the book offices that the increase takes place most largely.



I desire to call attention to the system of the selection of apprentices formerly carried out in France and touched upon above. Under that system printers were intelligent men. We so frequently find among ourselves those whose lack of education has unfitted them for our occupation that anything which offers a breakwater for the future against incompetent boys must be regarded with interest. The evil, however, has been, and undoubtedly is, greater in France than in our own country, on account of the lower standard of intelligence prevailing among artisans in that country.

We are told that masters, or "bosses," will select the more intelligent boys, because these will bring them the greater profit. Whatever plausibility there may be in this remark, we find in practice that boys are selected frequently because of personal considerations, and with little or no regard to their qualifications.

As elsewhere remarked, the Council of Prud'hommes is given jurisdiction over all questions concerning apprenticeship which may arise.

The apprenticeship laws deserve our attention in several respects. The duration of labor for apprentices under fourteen years of age must not exceed ten hours; from the ages of fourteen to sixteen, no more than twelve hours, and no apprentice under sixteen years of age can be called upon to work at night, which time is considered as being between nine o'clock in the evening and five o'clock in the morning.

On Sundays and legal fête days the apprentice cannot be required to labor.

The master is to teach the apprentice progressively and completely the art, trade, or profession to learn which is the object of the contract. The first two months of the apprenticeship are considered as a time of trial, during which the contract can be annulled by the will of either of the parties.

This last provision is, perhaps, particularly worthy of notice, and should not be overlooked in the efforts now so constantly being made to obtain good apprenticeship laws.

#### L'IMPRIMERIE NOUVELLE.

Soon after arriving in Paris I was shown the workings of the "Imprimerie Nouvelle," an establishment governed upon the coöperative principle, and which has well sustained itself during a period of eight trying years in the history of France. The fact of the presence of an American printer among them was received with joy by the employees of this establishment, and one of their number was deputed to present me with the following address:

"CITIZEN OF YOUNG AMERICA: The typographers of the Imprimerie Nouvelle, Coöperative Association of Paris, are happy to salute in you the representative of the typographers of the American Republic. You represent to our eyes a sympathetic bond which is doubly dear to us. As a printer you belong to the great family created by Gutenberg, uniting by the tie of union the disciples of that benefactor of humanity. As an American you recall to us the remembrance that our fathers have sealed with blood the friendship and fraternity of the two peoples, who, in a near future, relying upon the principles of the French Revolution of 1789, will proclaim anew and will cause to triumph the rights of man in all the nations of the universe.

"Citizen of America: We greet the people of the American Federal Union and the Typography of the New World!"

This account of the reception of your Delegate will serve to illustrate the feelings which were everywhere manifested toward us. They appeared always as the promptings of the heart, and not the mere formality of politeness.

The history and management of the Imprimerie Nouvelle present many points at once interesting and instructive.

Under Napoleon the First it was decreed that there should be no more than sixty master printers in the city of Paris. The abolition of this monopoly was frequently

sought for under the last Empire, but though often promised it was never given. Thus it became impossible for any person to institute a business of this nature without purchasing the right to do so from some one desiring to retire. Such right was valued at 20,000 francs.

Some journeymen printers of Paris had resolved, after many deliberations, to establish a Coöperative Society. The monopoly referred to stood in their way. To have bought a right would have exhausted one-half of the funds they had laboriously collected together for the institution of business. They resolved to appeal to the Government. Gambetta championed their cause, and in the early part of February, 1870, demanded that the Government should fix a time when it would report a law granting freedom from monopoly to the printing office, stating that for the three years gone by a number of printers united together had sought to begin business operations, but had been prevented by the non-action of the Government. To this demand an evasive answer was returned, but subsequently word was communicated to Gambetta through M. Thiers that if the printers desired it a patent would be given them to commence business until a law should be passed granting full freedom to the trade. Acting upon this our Parisian compositors made the necessary application, and inaugurated business in May, 1870.

Let me here give the opinion of M. Thiers as to the probable success of a coöperative enterprise, such as this was intended to be.

"A collection of workmen," writes he, "can be neither vigilant, nor severe, nor strong in will, nor economical, nor enlightened, as it is necessary they should be in order to direct with success an industrial enterprise. A master who cannot discharge his workmen, grade their salaries according to their merit, oblige them to work with such or such activity, or himself resolve, and that immediately, cannot prosper. Workingmen's Associations are nothing more than anarchy in industry."

Notwithstanding such prognostications of failure did the Coöperative Printing Office of Paris commence its work.

With a capital of \$8,000 they secured a credit of more than double that amount, and with six compositors and one press began operations. Their business soon increased, and at the present time a force of more than forty compositors and nearly seventy employees in the establishment demonstrates the fact that when printers undertake such an enterprise with wisdom and manage their affairs with prudence success will crown their efforts.

In September, 1870, upon the proclamation of the Republic, the monopoly in printing was abolished, and printing offices sprang up all over Paris.

The history of this Coöperative Printing Office does not carry us over a bed of roses. In 1873 came the "state of siege," when the journals printed in this office were suspended. The Directors of the establishment sought to have the order of suspension revoked. Let them give us in their own words the history of their troubles, for thus shall we gain a view of the ideas of the French officials—ideas cultivated by the Empire.

Say the printers: "In vain we addressed the President of the Republic, who sent us to the Minister of the Interior, who in turn sent us to the Governor of Paris, who sent us—to the devil. We said to the Governor: 'Your decree ruins us. We are five hundred stockholders who have put in our business enterprise all our economies. It is the product of our labor that you destroy with but the stroke of a pen.

"'You are five hundred,' said he. 'That is very dangerous! How can the Government permit such societies to exist?'

"'But, General,' we replied, 'on the contrary, our number is a pledge of security, of stability for society. Once we had nothing to preserve, to defend; now we have something. We have acquired property, and we are interested that the public peace may not be disturbed.'



"'Five hundred men!' said the Governor; 'five hundred men, you say?—and they listen to you, they march as a single man! Why, that is almost a regiment. It is very dangerous—very dangerous indeed!'

"And," continue the printers, "if the matter had rested with him for decision we believe that our organization would have been suppressed. Happily it did not so rest."

After the termination of the "state of siege" the journals upon the publication of which the Coöperative Printing Office relied for support were revived, and from that day to the present we can mark only a series of progressive steps.

The value of work done in 1870 was 106,847 francs; in 1877, 261,927 francs. During a period of eight years the net profits, after paying five per cent. upon the capital invested and more than doubling the money laid out in material, amounted to 217,018.38 francs. During the same period 894,338 francs have been paid for labor. At the present time a little more than 100,000 francs have been invested as capital. Six rapid steam presses and one hand press are employed, while power is supplied from a steam-engine and two boilers. Again, the men employed gain a better livelihood than would be possible for them to do in the majority of Parisian printing offices.

Such are the results obtained, and over many obstacles, within and without. As the Parisians have done in this office so may we do if we but conduct ourselves with equal wisdom and skill.

Let us now consider the rules of the organization, since they present many features worthy of careful examination. Under the law of France 200,000 francs is the limit of capital beyond which societies of this description may not go. This is now nominally the capital, having been advanced from 80,000 to 100,000 francs, and then to the present figure, although not yet all paid in. This capital is divided into stock of the value of 100 francs for each certificate, which is payable at the rate of one franc per week, although it may be paid more speedily. Compositors, proof-readers who are compositors, and pressmen are alone permitted to subscribe for stock, and they must have been members of their respective societies for at least three months previous. No one is permitted to subscribe for more than six shares.

The classes of those who may become stockholders are limited, to prevent the enterprise from losing its character as a socialistic undertaking and degenerating into a simple mercantile affair. The number of shares to which one person may subscribe is also limited, in order that the capital of one man may not dominate over the labor of many, and the stock become absorbed by a few men, who might conduct the institution for their own exclusive benefit. The Society reserves the right to borrow money to the extent of one-half the capital subscribed.

Each certificate of stock gives a right to 5 per cent. interest as a maximum, payable three years after its issuance. Thirty per cent. of the profits are carried annually to a reserve fund.

It is proposed to keep this fund intact until it equals the amount of capital invested. After that additional dividends may be given from the surplus; but it is desired, however far in the future the fulfilment may be, not to distribute the reserve until all the stockholders receive employment in the establishment. Then it will be divided per head, and not per number of shares held.

The right of an heir or a creditor of a member of the organization to receive or hold his stock, he not being eligible as a subscriber for stock, is not admitted; but a provision is made for the payment of the face value to such heir or creditor by the Association itself.

The affairs of the Nouvelle Imprimerie are regulated by a council of nine members—one-third going out each year; but no member of this council can be elected from among the employees of the office until one-half of the whole number of stockholders are there employed.

The last provision serves to prevent pressure upon the Council of Administration in favor of continuing abuses which may spring up, and for this purpose is undoubtedly well worthy of our consideration. Yet the workmen are not entirely unrepresented, for each twenty, or fraction of twenty, is entitled to choose a delegate, who may present such matters as especially concern them before the Council of Administration. The Council has also the power conferred upon it of choosing a director and sub-director from among the entire body of stockholders. This choice, however, must be confirmed at a general assembly of the stockholders.

The Director conducts the business under the control of the Council of Administration. The general assembly of the stockholders chooses, also, another committee of nine members, with a term of office of eighteen months—one-third being renewed each six months. This Committee is appointed especially for the purpose of examining and auditing the reports and accounts of the Committee of Administration. This Committee has also the power, when adjudged necessary, of summoning the stockholders in special meeting.

The management of the workshop is under the immediate control of the Director, who names the foreman and time-hands. Aside from this, a man's position in the office and the character of the work upon which he is engaged are determined by his swiftness as a compositor.

The selection of compositors as the work increases is done by lot from among the stockholders. If the one selected refuses to accept the situation offered, he is deprived of another opportunity until the rest of the stockholders may have had their turn.

Furloughs are made among those who have most recently entered the office, while discharges are made only by authority of the Council of Administration; but the person whose discharge is debated upon has the right to be represented before the Council by a third party.

No work is to be done by the hour which can possibly be executed by the piece.

Many other regulations for the working of the Association are embodied in the rules, but I have now given the most important ones. We should observe the constant desire to place the man of small capital on a par with the one holding the greatest number of shares allowed. While interest on stock is proportioned necessarily to the amount of money invested, yet the number of shares which any one person may hold is limited, and no superior right to employment is acquired by the possession of even the largest possible number. Each stockholder is allowed but one vote, and the dividends to be declared in the future will be per individual, and not per number of shares.

I have been thus explicit in giving the history and workings of this institution, believing that its rules embody certain points which it would be well for our coöperators to observe.

The reasoning used upon the formation of the *Nouvelle Imprimerie* was simply that by careful business management the immense profits reaped by the masters could be turned to the pockets of the workmen. We see that an average annual profit of about 25 per cent. has been earned, and in addition to this a large amount of money has been invested in material. Thus the ideas of the founders of the institution have been vindicated. In the future the more sanguine of its members may hope to include within it a large proportion of the private printing offices of Paris, and thus a sort of republic of capital will be established among printers, each receiving exactly what his labor is worth—all becoming fairly prosperous, and no one man gaining an immense fortune based upon the toils and struggles of many.

Time will show if this be true Socialism.

The history of this Association exhibits the desires of the French mechanics, as they are strongly and well expressed in a pamphlet entitled, "*Histoire d'une Association Ouvrière*," from which I will make a few quotations:

"Workingmen, let us group ourselves to work for our own profit. Let us not



dream of riches. Let us not imitate those who have but one ideal—to arrive as soon as possible to fortune, by no matter what means. Let us seek only to secure to ourselves a to-morrow.

"Our ideal should consist in becoming at least the equal of the peasant. The Revolution secured to him the possession of the soil; let us by collective economy gain the possession of our instrument of labor.

"Legislative acts should not create or precede, but should follow and confirm the acts of the interested parties.

"We expect nothing of the State, and if it would ask what we would have it do for us we will make the proud response of Diogenes to Alexander: 'Stand a little out of my sunshine!' Let it take away the shackles which hold in bondage the development and application of our ideas.

"We wish to form free, independent groups, having their own special existence. They will know how to unite, to consolidate themselves, abandoning only that portion of their liberty rigorously necessary for the advancement of their well-being.

"The laws which regulate the relations of capital and labor have been elaborated and voted by the possessors of money, and to their profit. They constitute a social state that one calls just, and which is only legal.

"Is it forbidden to us to hope a social union wherein groups of workmen, strongly constituted, having approved themselves worthy, will execute at their own risks and perils, and also to their profit, the great work with which industry charges them?

"The Polytechnic School gives to the State civil engineers; the Central School gives to it the directors of great works; the professional schools give us administrators and managers.

"Engineers, architects, directors of works, are not the exclusive monopoly of capitalists. We think that the workingmen's societies could also remunerate honorably their services, and give to them a part, make for them a place that capital does not always accord them.

"This revolution can and should accomplish itself without disturbance and without violence.

"We wish to be able to guarantee ourselves freely against all the evil chances of life, the abusive reduction of salaries, loss of work, sickness and the infirmities of old age.

"We wish no longer after forty or fifty years of honest labor to finish our days in a hospital or upon the sick-bed of an alms-house.

"We wish instruction. It is our right; it is the duty of our governors to give it to us; let us say more—it is their security.

"We wish to elevate ourselves without lowering others. We wish to acquire, to possess, without taking anything from others.

"We wish all this while conforming to the laws, but to laws made and accepted by us. This is why we wish earnestly and above all—the *Republic!*"

#### PARIS EXPOSITION.

In following out your instructions, I felt that my duties lay rather among printers themselves, and in the consideration of their organizations, than in examining the merely mechanical branch of our trade. For this reason I regarded the Exposition with less interest and care than might otherwise have been the case.

Three type-setting machines there attracted the attention of many visitors. One of these, that of Kastenbein, received the honor of a silver medal. The principle embodied in all these machines was very similar, and, while they were successful in composing rapidly, yet so much time was spent in justification as largely to balance any advantage which might be gained from superior speed. Some time will yet elapse ere machines drive hand labor out of the market.

One saw in Paris three excellent perfecting pressés—the Ingham, the Marinoni and the Derriey—the first being of English, the others of French, construction. While the Ingham may be excellent for large forms, it is heavy and cumbrous, occupying much more space than either of its competitors. The Marinoni seems more intricate and more liable to get out of order than the Derriey, to which, I think, the palm must be given for simplicity, compactness and speed. The speed of these three machines is rated about the same, being 20,000 perfected sheets per hour.

As regards bed and platen presses, America seems to take an indisputable lead. The Gordon and Liberty presses find their imitators across the water, while the Universal is manufactured in England under arrangements with the American owners. The Philadelphia Model Press is now made in England, and was exhibited in Paris by Americans and Englishmen.

Page's American wood type presented, for size and beauty of finish, something novel to the French eye. A Canadian firm also made an excellent exhibit of this character.

Mr. Wm. J. Kelly, of New York, executed at the Exhibition color-work which excited the wonder and curiosity of Frenchmen. His little American printing office constantly attracted an admiring crowd. He exhibited type from James Conner's Sons' and Farmer, Little & Co.'s foundries, and from the Central Type Foundry of St. Louis. His cases and cabinets were from Vanderburgh & Wells, and his racks from A. C. Hoyt and S. Collins & Co. His presses were of the Universal pattern.

It will thus be seen that our exhibit of printers' materials was choice, though small. While this was for some reasons to be regretted, yet it is to be borne in mind that American inventions in other lines have been repeatedly copied in Europe without any reward being conferred upon the inventor, and our founders had little reason to expect a different fate for their improvements.

The Paris Exposition illustrated no great new invention in printing, and its features of largest interest to us are presented above.

The French are to be congratulated upon having conducted an Exposition so eminently successful in character and attendance as that of 1878.

#### FRENCH TYPOGRAPHY.

In some respects French typography is far behind our own; in others, it excels ours. In office-furniture we unquestionably take the lead.

Our presses seem superior in speed and action, and at the same time less liable to breakage. Our type appears more durable, and of a more regular and beautiful face, as well as greater in variety.

A French foundry which produces nine hundred varieties of size and style of type is regarded as something extraordinary, and the stranger is expected to be astonished at the dimensions of its six-line pica specimens.

Much of the French book-work is exceedingly neat, and great taste is displayed in title-pages. Almost all French books, no matter how costly, exhibit very serious deficiencies in the register of pages. It is not unusual to see sheets which have been printed two and three ems pica out of the way.

The greater portion of French books are sold unbound. The French classical works can be obtained when bound and in octavo from 3 francs to 4 francs (60 cents to 80 cents) per volume. Unbound they can be bought 28 cents cheaper.

In intricate and delicate job rule-work we have not yet learned how to excel the French. The stock certificates of the Paris Coöperative Printing Office give an example of artistic arrangements of type-metal rules which I have never seen surpassed.

In color-work we can and do daily lead the French. This is the case with our job-work generally. On showing some specimens of American color-printing to several



members of the *Chambre Syndicale* who were with me at the French Exposition they exclaimed: "And this is the work of your country! You are victorious; we cannot equal it!"

#### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

The Parisian printers manifested, both individually and through the *Chambre Syndicale*, their appreciation of your motives in sending a Delegate to France. The name of Benjamin Franklin appears to be as familiar to them as it is to us, and, in common with their brethren among French workmen, they look to America to teach them the way toward a truer republicanism. Their liberty would now appear to us almost repression, and last year, more than at present, their Government seemed republican in form but monarchical in principle. Perhaps the event may prove this extremely conservative Government to have been a blessing, for liberty slowly and with difficulty acquired will be less extreme and violent in its tendencies, and as a consequence will establish itself more firmly upon the ruins of a vicious system.

It was a pleasant thing for me to learn, as I trust it will be for you to know, that the republican leaders of France find the supporters of liberty, of education, and of the separation of Church and State among those whom we are happy to call our fellow-workingmen.

The condition of workingmen in France has borne close relationship to the status of political affairs.

During the past hundred years France has hung like a pendulum swung from the extreme of tyranny to the opposite extreme of license, and these uncertainties of action have sometimes raised happy expectations in the minds of the French mechanics only to crush them by the succeeding pulsation.

In 1848 the Republic promised mechanics the greatest possible assistance in forming coöperative societies. The leaders of the revolution of that year sought to equalize somewhat the existing extremes of poverty and wealth. Their efforts were occasionally ill-timed and misdirected; but, whether they were beneficial or injurious, the Napoleonic Government found danger to itself in the existence of trades-societies and coöperative experiments.

All such things were repressed with a severe hand, and only a few years before the termination of the Empire were trades-societies allowed to breathe a freer air. A single day served to tear down the Government of the Empire, and as that fell many of the monopolies which had made it odious likewise disappeared. Fortunately shrewd leaders have prevented the succeeding Government from going to the excesses which had caused republicanism to be regarded with suspicion by the conservative element of France. Under the present régime the progress of workingmen has oftentimes appeared slow to them, but it is appreciable. Still, however, it remains the case that police officers are present at all large gatherings of workingmen, in order to report what is said; but their presence there seems rather formal than otherwise.

Mechanics who have attained prominence in public life in France are rarely found, yet the colleague of Victor Hugo, Senator from the Department of the Seine, is a marble-cutter by trade.

Few French artisans have ventured as yet into the learned professions. It is, nevertheless, to be noted that the physician of the Paris Compositors' Society is a printer.

The highest education can be obtained in Paris without expenditure for tuition fees. To graduate in law or medicine it is simply necessary to attend a course of lectures and examinations for a certain number of years. This requires perseverance rather than a great amount of money; but I doubt if many French mechanics possess the requisite amount of what we call "stick-to-ativeness." Their lower

education is largely under clerical control, but remedies for this are now being considered.

French mechanics do not own the houses in which they reside. Buildings wherein they find quarters are generally five and six stories in height, and no family occupies more than a few rooms upon a single floor. We can readily understand the absence of that which we are pleased to call the "home" feeling. The former necessity for the walling-in of cities resulted in compressing large numbers of people into a very small space, so that the simple cottage, with a little plat of ground, owned by the industrious mechanic, cannot now be found in the cities of France.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

My thanks are due to all the members of the *Chambre Syndicale* of the Printers of Paris for courtesies received, among whom I would mention M. Marétheux, M. Ménestrier, President of the *Compositors*; MM. Goyon, Gruson, Dorchy, Dupont, Mantel, Alary, Morgan, and the President of the *Chambre Syndicale*, and to M. Masquin, Director of the *Coöperative Printing Office*, who tendered me many favors. Mr. Patrick Casey and brothers supplied me with much information relative to the practical workings of French printing offices, as well as in other ways showing me many courtesies. The American Commission extended to me all the favors in its power.

#### SWITZERLAND.

After a stay of six weeks in Paris, on the 27th of June I took train for Geneva, where I remained long enough to gain a little knowledge of the workings of the Unions in Switzerland. In that Republic is breathed the pure air of freedom, while to all trade organizations perfect liberty is granted and full protection given. That they have profited by it may be apparent from the following pages.

The relations between the printers of Geneva and the masters appear to be quite amicable. Labor is respected, and a cause for that respect is found in the fact that a large majority of the employing printers commenced active life at the case. The result of this is the toning down of the antagonisms between the two classes and the existence of a mutual self-respect.

Another cause of friendship lies probably in the fact that there are in Geneva no extensive printing offices, and frequently the employer and the employed labor side by side. Thus the compositors are not engaged in comparing to their dissatisfaction any great differences in social grade. Geneva in this regard practically presents some of the beauties of an ideal Republic.

#### SWISS TYPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETIES.

The printers of Switzerland are divided into two organizations, according to the language spoken, whether French or German. With the printers of the "*Confédération Romande*" my relations were more intimate, and of their rules I will speak more particularly.

The printers under the jurisdiction of the "*Société Fédérative des Typographes de la Suisse Romande*" number 400. One hundred of these are in the canton of Geneva, and the others in the cantons of Vaud, Fribourg and Neuchâtel. The seat of their government is at Geneva. M. Ott is their President.

The objects of this Society are described as follows:

- "1. To maintain and better the price of labor. 2. To establish a tariff as uniform as possible, in order to get rid of competition in all French-speaking Switzerland.
3. To prevent the abuse of apprentices by limiting the number, and to watch that the young men entering into apprenticeship may have sufficient notions of orthography to exercise properly their trade in order to gain profitably their subsistence.
4. To establish a Union of such a nature that all printers working in French-speaking Switzerland, making a part of one of the sections of the Confederation, may be



kindly received and aided in all Swiss or foreign localities where there exist typographical societies exercising reciprocity. 5. To seek all means of creating cooperative associations, and to extend the institution of mutual relief. 6. To advance typographic art. 7. To oppose by all legal means composition by women."

No strike can be declared until the purposes of the proposed strike have been submitted to the Central Committee, which will give its counsel in the matter. No strike can take place until after all means of conciliation have failed.

The seat of the Central Committee is fixed each year, and the Section, or Union, of the town chosen selects the Central Committee, which consists of seven members. The duties of the Central Committee are to watch over the observance of the present rules and the interests of the Society, and to defend them; to create a section in each locality where the number of printers may equal six; to fix the date and place of the yearly General Assembly of delegates, which takes place in the month of May; and in its hands are placed the funds of the Society.

The number of delegates to the General Assembly is not definitely fixed. Each delegate is simply required to bring with him the signatures of those whom he specially represents, and each name counts as a vote.

The naming of a committee to audit accounts, as well as a power of general legislation, is in the hands of this body.

Each Section is expected to contribute 25 centimes (5 cents) per month for each of its members toward the expenses of the General Committee.

There is issued weekly an organ in the interests of the Confederation. It is styled *Le Gutenberg*, and promulgates officially all circulars or decisions of the Central Committee. Subscription to this paper is obligatory on the part of each member of the Society.

All members of the Society are also subject to its arrangements as to mutual relief. Each member pays for this purpose 25 centimes per week. When a member falls ill he is entitled to relief for six months, if his illness so long continues, at the rate of 2 francs per day. Nothing is given for an illness of less than four days. A certificate of sickness from a physician is required.

Upon the death of a member there is given to the widow, or those having right, the sum of 50 francs toward the expenses of the funeral.

The state of cash on hand is determined every three months by a committee appointed for that purpose by the Section where the Central Committee sits. Their statement is made public through *Le Gutenberg*.

#### THE SOCIETY OF GENEVA.

In the year 1877 the printers of Geneva demanded an advance of twenty per cent. upon the wages then received. The masters offered ten per cent., and thereupon a Commission of Arbitration was formed, and such advantages given to the printers as practically to increase the gain to fifteen per cent. The scale of prices which then received the signatures of the representatives of both the masters and the workmen deserves our attention in many respects.

The rate of pay is fixed at 5½ francs for ten hours' labor. The price of composition varies according to the size of type, and is 75 centimes (15 cents) for nonpareil and 60 centimes (12 cents) for brevier and pica, this price being per one thousand letters. Distribution is paid one-fourth the price of composition. Fifty per cent. additional is paid for all work over ten hours, and the same for work on the 1st of January, Ascension Day, Christmas and Sundays.

The apprentice regulations deserve our careful consideration. The term of apprenticeship is fixed at three years for compositors or for pressmen. One apprentice is allowed for ten compositors, and one in addition in offices employing more than ten. The sons of printers are to be accepted in preference to others.

A boy desiring to become an apprentice cannot be finally received as such until

after two months' trial, when he is required to pass an examination before the delegates of a "Commission Arbitrale," or before experts named by them. The master employing him is made one of the special committee of experts, if the matter is placed in the hands of such a committee. This examination is in orthography, grammar and similar studies. At the close of his apprenticeship a new examination will be imposed upon him, and he will only be recognized as a workman after he has shown himself fit to exercise his profession, and has obtained a certificate to that effect.

The Commission can prolong the term of apprenticeship for one year. If the negligence of the apprentice is the cause of his inefficiency after a term of three years' apprenticeship, he must continue to labor under the same conditions until his defects are cured. If the master be in fault, he will be expected to employ the boy until he is rendered competent, paying him meanwhile the wages of a journeyman.

An apprentice cannot be employed upon other business than that of the printing office.

The natural effect of these regulations will be readily perceived. Boys are required to know the business, and masters to teach it to them; and a remedy is supplied in case of default adequate to and not exceeding the negligence which has occurred. It will be seen that boys totally unfitted for the business cannot so readily become journeymen as under our own system, or rather lack of system.

Another important and unique feature of the Section of Geneva is that of the "Commission Arbitrale." This was also agreed upon when the tariff was accepted by the master and men. I cannot more briefly describe this than by copying the language of the scale of prices:

"A permanent Commission of Arbitration of six members (three masters and three workmen) will adjudicate all disputes or demands which may be submitted to it, whether of affairs contained in the tariff or of unanticipated cases which are analogous in principle.

"The decisions of the Commission will be without appeal.

"The Commission will be renewed every year in the month of January, and will be named half by the masters and half by the workmen.

"In cases where the Commission Arbitrale may be equally divided upon a question, a seventh special member will be named by lot upon the presentation of a name by each one of the parties in opposition.

"The decision taken is to be immediately carried out."

All manner of disputes between masters and journeymen are carried before this tribunal, even those involving legal questions. Thus among the printers of Geneva there is established a sort of Conseil Prud'homme without the sanction of law. A legal recognition is obtained as follows:

A compositor, for instance, brings his demand for moneys due from his employer before the Commission Arbitrale; it is, perhaps, decided in his favor; the employer then wishes to carry the question before a Judge of the Peace.

The first question the Judge puts to him is this: "What is the judgment of your Commission Arbitrale?" That being stated, the Judge says he can do no more than affirm it, as the Commission is necessarily better acquainted with trade usages, &c., than himself. Thus, although without a legal authorization, full force is given to its decisions.

The manner of measuring type adopted in Geneva is similar to that of Paris. Twenty-five letters are counted to the alphabet, the average letter being taken as a gauge.

#### THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING OFFICE OF GENEVA.

About ten years ago, at the time of a rather disastrous strike in Geneva, it was resolved by the Society to undertake a Coöperative Printing Office. This was

started with but little capital, and had continued with varying success up to the time of my visit.

The capital is fixed at 20,000 francs, divided into four hundred shares of 50 francs each. These may be paid for gradually or immediately, and draw interest at the rate of four per cent. after the payment of the full amount.

It is proposed that, as soon as may be, thirty-five per cent. of the profits shall be used for the purchase of shares of stock to be selected by lot, and that when all such shares are purchased back by the Association the printing office shall be turned over to the Union of Geneva to be conducted by that body. Another thirty-five per cent. of the profits is for the benefit of the Society, and thirty per cent. goes to a reserve fund. Whatever may be the number of shares owned by any one person, no single person is given more than one vote.

The government of the Association is put in the first place in the hands of a Council of Direction, composed of the Director, the foreman and the Cashier. The general management of the printing office rests in its hands. This Council is to present each year a full balance sheet to a Council of Surveillance, which is composed of seven members, three of whom are printers. This Council is specially instructed to keep the books, and each month to make a careful examination of the cash account.

Regarding every attempt to establish coöperative printing offices as a step in the right direction, and as one tending to secure the freedom of the working classes, a description of this Coöperative Printing Office of Geneva seems to me important and interesting, although as yet its success has been somewhat limited.

#### SWISS LABOR LAWS.

The Swiss law concerning manufactures contains provisions of interest to us as workmen. We read in the "Law Concerning Labor in Manufactories," Article 5, as follows:

"A federal law will give the necessary directions as to the responsibility arising from the prosecution of manufactures.

"In the meanwhile the following principles will be applied by the judge called upon to pronounce:

"(a) The proprietor of a manufactory is responsible for damages caused, if one under his direction, a representative, director, or surveyor of the manufactory, has, in the exercise of his functions, occasioned by his fault corporeal injuries to or the death of an employee or a workman. (b) The proprietor of a manufactory is also responsible when, without special fault on the part of his mandatories, representatives, directors, or surveyors, the prosecution of the manufactory has occasioned injuries to or the death of a workman or employee, unless he can prove that the accident comes from a greater force or unless it has been created by the fault of the sufferer. If such has been partially the cause of the accident, the responsibility of the manufacturer as to damages is reduced in a just proportion. (c) The actions for damages cannot be prosecuted after two years from the date of the day when the accident has caused the bodily injuries or death. (d) The Federal Council will designate beside those industries of which the exercise suffices to engender grave maladies, to which extends the responsibility provided for accidents."

This law covers a point which the workmen of England are now trying to gain, and which it will become incumbent upon us to obtain in the future. As this law is practically successful in Switzerland, the example of that country will refute many arguments brought against its adoption in our own.

Children under fourteen years of age are not permitted to work in manufactories, and those under eighteen cannot work at night or on Sunday.

Under our glorious common law little or no remedy is given against a person who defrauds a trade society of its money. In Switzerland such a man is treated like any other robber.



## SUNDAY LABOR IN FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND.

This is a subject to which my attention was forced while in France, on account of what appeared to be its effects as viewed from my standpoint as a workingman. I was told that more than one-half the printers of Paris were employed on Sunday—that in fact those who were not employed more or less on that day constituted the exceptions. This was much regretted by the compositors themselves, yet only slight steps had been taken to counteract it, a merely nominal sum additional for Sunday labor being demanded. They stated that Sunday work furnished an excuse for keeping down wages; that employers, being remonstrated with on account of the low daily rate of wages paid, would remark that their employees could make it up by working on Sunday.

It does not appear that more work is actually performed per man through Sunday labor; even less, perhaps, is the case. We know by experience that after six days of hard work Sunday is most refreshing. We can imagine the enervating and demoralizing effects of constant, unremitted effort.

If I may venture the theory, in this is to be found one of the reasons for that lack of industry displayed by the French and Swiss compositors, even when at work, in comparison with their English or American brethren.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

I had at Geneva the pleasure of going through the establishment of Charles Bonnet & Co., for the manufacture of wood type and printers' furniture, and, although small in comparison with similar American manufactories, it appeared to be well managed.

I desire to render acknowledgments, especially, to Mr. Ziegler, President of the Commission Arbitrale of Geneva, and Mr. Roche, President of the Section of Geneva, for information received and favors extended.

## ITALY.

I remained but ten days in Switzerland, and subsequently determined to fulfil my instructions in presenting the thanks of the International Typographical Union to the printers of Italy for the medal and address sent by them to us in 1876.

Between Geneva and Turin I met Mr. George D. Moreau, a printer of Philadelphia, who continued my travelling companion for the most part of my journey through Italy.

Turin was the first city visited *en route*, and concerning my treatment there let *Il Tipografo*, a typographical journal published in Rome, speak.

Under the head of "Official Correspondence," from Turin, it says:

"On the 23d. of July last, Signor Jackson H. Ralston, representative of the Typographical Societies of the United States and Canada, accompanied by his Colleague Moreau, of Philadelphia, unexpectedly arrived in our city. He was instructed by the American Typographical Union to convey its sincere thanks for the silver medal presented by the printers of Italy.

"This information came upon us suddenly, and all were eager to grasp the hand and to make the acquaintance of our American guests.

"Colleague Baussé, President of the Assembly, assisted by Colleague Peyretti, attended our guests on either hand, like two guardian angels, and flew with them from one part of the city to the other. Immediately the Committee arranged a banquet, to take place on Wednesday, which, notwithstanding the limited time allowed, they were assured would be productive of the most gratifying results. More than eighty persons were present at this banquet, including several master printers, and the Committee has reason to be proud of the generous feeling which attended their efforts to extend a cordial welcome to our guests from over the sea.

"The excellent Cavaliero Pons, who had honored us with his presence, was

nominated by President Sapei to preside, and was elected by acclamation. Toward the close of the repast Signor Pons addressed the assemblage in words so touching and appropriate as to thrill every fibre of the heart. The reply of our American guest was happily translated by Signor Pons. It was expressed in words that came from a sympathetic soul, as he spoke of his great joy in meeting so many of his Italian brethren, and his fervent wish for the future prosperity of our Association. It would be superfluous to say that his speech was received with hearty applause. He was followed by Colleague Paglieri, who spoke in French, and who offered a toast to the typographers of the two hemispheres and to the illustrious men of the land of Columbus.

"The entertainment was closed most agreeably by President Sapei, and truly we may say it was a brilliant typographical feast.

"The Colleague Ralston had intended to set out immediately for Paris; but the Committee insisted that he should go to Rome and form the acquaintance of his Roman colleagues. His friend and himself were escorted to the station, and notice of their anticipated arrival telegraphed to Rome, that the Committee there might extend to them a festive greeting."

Of my reception by our Turin brethren, I cannot speak in too high terms of appreciation. Every facility for viewing objects of typographical or historical interest was given me. And I observed with pleasure that each Italian seemed to feel a special pride in America as a land discovered by one of his own countrymen, and that the admiration for our advancement in typographic art was universal and sincere.

The Union of Turin numbers 300 men. Its members have at their command a library of several thousand volumes, largely composed of works treating on typographical subjects.

Printers receive from 4 to 5 francs per day, or from about 80 cents to \$1.

Although none of the printing offices of that city are large, yet the "Typographie Editrice," the "Imprimerie Bona," and the "Imprimerie Royale" appear to be well-conducted establishments.

After remaining two days in Turin we departed for Rome. A telegram had been sent by our friends announcing the hour of our arrival in the Eternal City, and we were greeted at the station by about twenty members of the Roman Union. Then rapidly passed three never-to-be-forgotten days. The curiosities of Rome were presented to our gaze—the Pantheon, the Catacombs, the Palace of the Cæsars, the Colosseum, the Arches of Constantine and Septimus Severus, the Vatican and St. Peter's. We noted, withal, that amid the grand antiquities of this ancient capital of the civilized world, modern street cars ran along the Flaminian Way, and the statue of Pompey overlooked the contentions of a modern court room. We remembered, as we gazed upon the majestic ruins of the Roman Forum, that within those walls two thousand years ago were congregated the plebeian and the patrician—that there were fought battles between capital and labor similar, though under different forms, to those waged at the present day, and we asked ourselves the question, "Will this conflict ever cease?"

During our stay in Rome we were made as familiar as possible in that short space of time with its leading printing offices—the Royal Printing Office, those of the Italian Senate and Chamber and of the War Department. The new office for work of the Chamber we found especially admirable as regards ventilation and light. In these respects Italian composing rooms are frequently deficient. It was to be noted that much of the material was imported. The presses were largely of German make, and even such an article as a composing-stick was frequently of French manufacture. As American foundry materials possess an almost equal cheapness, with vast superiority in workmanship, Italy seems to offer our people a field for export not to be passed idly by.

In Rome is found the headquarters of the Italian Typographical Society, and to that body your representative presented, according to instructions, the thanks of the International Typographical Union for the medal and address received by us in 1876, through Signor Moriondo.

My reception in the performance of this duty was most cordial, and many mutual wishes were expressed for a closer union between the members of the Craft in the land of Columbus and the country which he had discovered.

The day before departing from Rome a banquet was tendered your Delegate under the auspices of the Comité Centrale, in which a large number of our Roman brethren took part.

This was made another occasion for the manifestation of good will toward America and Americans.

By one speaker, especially, were our printers complimented, in that he assured his countrymen that our ambition was to excel, to become well educated, to fit ourselves for the highest stations; and he earnestly urged upon his compatriots to do likewise.

In order to reveal to you more clearly the true sentiment of our Italian brethren toward us, I will again quote a paragraph from the account of this Roman banquet, published in *Il Tipografo* August 3, 1878, which says:

"At eight o'clock on Sunday evening last assembled at the Circo Agonale our colleagues, representing all the printers of Rome, except those of the *Popolo Romano* and some other old, decayed establishments not included in our organization. It was a joyous assemblage, met to express the great pleasure we experienced in doing honor to the representative of our American brethren, of a fraternity with which we had so recently established pleasant relations, which we believed would be solidified and cemented in the future. We were an assemblage of printers met also to adorn the art we represent, and to increase by a community of interest a fraternal feeling among the typographers of the whole civilized world."

The Society of Rome numbers now nearly five hundred enthusiastic Union printers. Its pathway has been beset with difficulties, but fixity of purpose and energetic action have overcome them. The past few years have tripled the number of Union printers in Rome.

There are now about thirty Unions, with twenty-five hundred members, under the jurisdiction of the Italian Typographical Society.

The Italian Union is governed in much the same manner as that of Switzerland. One of its peculiar features is found in the existence of a typographical bank.

It would be impossible for me to enumerate all to whom I am indebted for favors shown me at Rome. I can only thank the members of the Union generally.

From Rome your representative proceeded to Florence, and here, with Mr. Moreau, he was again received with the highest marks of attention. Our coming had been made known in advance by our Roman brethren, and we were most cordially welcomed. We visited the former Royal Printing Office, and found it apparently one of the best-conducted European typographical establishments.

In Florence is located a Coöperative Printing Office, which has now been established nearly ten years. Ten compositors are therein employed, and the coöperative principle has proven itself successful. It is interesting to note that such has been the fact, since it may serve as an encouragement to us in similar undertakings.

I was also in Florence the recipient of a banquet at the hands of her typographers, and the sentiments expressed toward us on that occasion did honor to the Italian heart. I am especially indebted to Signor Martini, President of the Union, and to members of the *Chambre Syndicale* for favors accorded me.

I would gladly have given as full extracts from the excellent report of Signor Moriondo upon our Exposition as I have done from that of Emile François, but



regret that my acquaintance with the Italian language is too limited to render it any adequate justice, and will merely remark that it treated largely of our advancement in the art of printing, and did its author honor.

After remaining but a single day we departed from Florence, and passing through Turin, rested there long enough to greet some of her esteemed typographers. Thence I proceeded to Paris *en route* for London, and in this latter city continued observations during my few remaining days in England.

#### REVIEW.

I will now briefly glance at the manner in which your instructions have been carried out.

The first item directed me to "recognize in a proper manner the compliment paid the printers of the United States in 1876 by the printers of France."

It was the fortune of your Delegate to present such an acknowledgment before an assembly of eighteen hundred Parisian typographers, as well as to the members of the *Chambre Syndicale*. The enthusiastic reception accorded him in the performance of this pleasing duty was a profound assurance of the friendship of our French brethren toward us.

The second instruction was to "investigate the state of trade in France."

While the printing business was generally dull throughout the world last year, yet French printers seem to have suffered less than their neighbors. The strike in Paris, however, brought such a large accession from abroad to the ranks of typographers in that city as materially to affect the labor market, and this induced an unnatural depression. This subject has been touched upon generally in the course of this report.

The third point of inquiry was into "the price of labor as received by the printers" in France.

The answer to this has been given while treating of the Paris Typographical Society. Prices throughout France range from 20 to 40 per cent. below the Parisian scale.

A fourth subject for examination was "the condition of French printers in comparison with our own."

This I have considered in the preceding pages to a considerable extent. A lengthened stay abroad would be necessary to give the subject the careful study which it deserves.

The fifth instruction given your Delegate was that he should "inform himself as to the strength of trades-unions and their relations to the laws of France, and consider what measures are most feasible looking toward the union of printers of this country with those of France."

Statistics covering the ground embraced in the first clause of this instruction have not been available to your Delegate. Without doubt the nine years since France became a Republic have witnessed a great advancement on the part of trades-societies in numbers and strength. The Parisian Typographical Society includes nine-tenths of the compositors of the capital city.

The societies are still required to submit reports of all their doings to the police headquarters. Their funds are better protected than with us, since the embezzler of society moneys finds prison doors open for him, and on no technical plea can he escape punishment. International organization is not permitted under the French laws. The only steps left for us to take toward a union of the printers of this country with those of France lie in an interchange of Union cards, together with correspondence upon all questions of great national or international interest.

The sixth instruction directs your representative to consider the affiliation of printers "with other trades for the purpose of elevating all."

Under this head there are more points for examination and consideration rightly

embraced than can be discussed at the present time. I will call your attention simply to the Trades Congress of England, which presents us an example worthy of emulation. This body has by prudence and wisdom brought to itself a surprising amount of influence, which makes itself felt every year on the floor of the House of Commons. May we not take the first step toward a North American Workingmen's Congress which shall be in truth that which its name imports?

The last instruction given your Delegate concerned "the prevailing sentiment in France with regard to the disposition of property."

At the time of the Revolution of 1793 France suffered much from the monopoly of lands in the hands of a few individuals. The Code Napoleon provided a new law for the transmission of all property. Under its provisions a testator can will from his child, if he has but one, only one-half of his property; if he leaves two children, only one-fourth of his estate. Furthermore, this property is divided equally among all the children, and, if possible, the property itself, and not its equivalent value, is divided. This law prevents the aggregation of immense masses of real or personal estate in the hands of a few men. In France the Vanderbilt inheritance would have been equally divided, and so rendered less dangerous to the community than it assuredly is in our own land.

The result of this law is such that throughout France farms have received equal division, and no man can boast of his thousand acres.

Thus, since farmers of great wealth do not exist, the poor agriculturist cannot complain of the inequalities and injustice of fortune.

A further instruction was given your Delegate relative to a proper acknowledgment of the medal and address sent us in 1876 by the printers of Italy.

It was the desire of the International Union in 1877 that suitable resolutions printed upon parchment, in the highest style of the art, expressing the thanks of the American printers toward their brethren of Italy, should be prepared and presented by your Delegate to the Italian Union; but at the time of his departure from America the appropriation for the necessary expenses of the trip did not in the opinion of the Secretary-Treasurer and of himself justify taking a step involving as much expense as this would have occasioned. Your representative, therefore, confined himself to expressing verbally, and to the best of his ability, before the printers of Rome, of Turin, and of Florence, the feelings which controlled your hearts. He also made known your sentiments to the Central Committee of the Union of Italy, and they will not suffer your expressions of good will soon to pass into oblivion.

#### FINANCES.

The total sum turned over to your Delegate for his expenses amounted to \$405. His expenditures during an absence from America from May 1 to August 22 were but \$465, leaving \$60 paid out of his own pocket, and counting his time as without value. A portion of the deficiency was returned from the proceeds of a lecture upon the subject-matter of his voyage, delivered by him after his return to Washington.

#### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

A number of suggestions connected with the management of trades-societies were brought forcibly before me while in Europe, as seeming well calculated to prove beneficial if adopted or expanded among ourselves.

In order to bring us into closer relationship with our neighbors across the water, three points arise as the first to be recommended:

1. That English, French and Italian travelling-cards be recognized as placing the bearers upon the same footing as if they bore our own.

2. That the officers of the International Typographical Union be instructed to send our annual reports and other important communications to the officers of the

English, French and Italian Typographical Societies, and request a return of this favor.

3. That the printers of those countries be cordially invited to send delegates to our conventions.

As has been before stated, the London Compositors' Society recognizes American cards, while the Italian and French Unions appear very willing so to do. If the last two suggestions are brought into force, speedy and definite information will be transmitted between the nations as to all individual crises, as well as to all improvements or changes in the mechanical portion of our business or advancement in the management of trades-societies.

A further recommendation is :

4. That a relief system be adopted, and the International Union be incorporated in some one or more States or provinces, in order to insure its members.

In the existence of systems similar to those indicated by the preceding paragraph lies the great strength of foreign trades-unions.

Their members do not willingly forfeit their rights to relief during sickness or a return of money to their families after death. They thus become more devoted Union men than are found usually in our organizations.

5. That no general strike be ordered by any Union unless directed by a two-thirds vote of all its members in good standing, this vote to be taken by offices in such manner that all members may have the opportunity of exercising their franchise brought home to them.

A rule similar to this in character prevails with the Parisian Typographical Society. There have been many complaints in this country in the past that the Union men who had most at stake in a strike would be outvoted at the meetings by those who had little to lose. The International Union has thrown some safeguards around this subject to ward off unnecessary strikes ; but they seem not always to have accomplished their purposes in a satisfactory manner. The Parisian rule appears to embody the right principle.

6. That an examination be had of all would-be apprentices to discover if they are fit for the business.

This proposition corresponds with the present rule in Switzerland. Our trade is cursed by the presence of many whom nothing short of a miracle could render fit for the first step in the printing business. Such men should be headed off in the beginning, and an ordinary examination in the rudiments of grammar, orthography and punctuation would drive them away from a trade upon which they reflect no credit. This move could be made effectual either by agreement with employing printers or by a rule of the Subordinate Unions independent of the employers.

7. That no one be admitted to any Union without examination into his competency as a printer.

This rule naturally follows the preceding one. There are those who, having sufficient knowledge to acquire the printing business, are yet incompetent workmen, either through their own fault or that of their employers. Such men should not be allowed to join our Union until they become fairly skilled workmen. Whatever we gain in numbers through their presence with us we lose in influence.

If our body is to have a high standing it must be attained through the fact that its members are good workmen. The possession of a Union card must be a guarantee of excellence at the trade.

8. That Subordinate Unions be instructed to endeavor to secure the abolition of the system of working apprentices on a "stint."

#### CONCLUSION.

Before finishing this report I desire to present my thanks to the International Typographical Union for having selected me as its Delegate upon this important



mission, and also my thanks to the Delegates from Washington who presented my name before your body.

You have conferred upon me that which I esteem the greatest honor as well as the greatest pleasure of my life. You have in session and through your officers treated me with a degree of courtesy leaving nothing more to be desired—a courtesy which I must ever appreciate and can never forget.

I have endeavored to execute your commands according to the best of my ability, and wherein I may have failed I crave your charity. The duties assigned to me were unusual and unprecedented. With no beaten track to guide me it was inevitable that errors and shortcomings should ensue; yet I trust that a way has been broken which will yield results of great value to workingmen.

This will probably be the last time that I shall take an active part in your proceedings; but it will be a proud remembrance with me if the future shall show that while we were together I did anything to advance the interests of the printers under the jurisdiction of this body and the well-being of the International Typographical Union.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JACKSON H. RALSTON,

Delegate of the International Typographical Union to Paris in 1878.





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